

28 February 2022

Dear Honorable Members of the Commerce Committee,

***Re: HB 5263, An Act Concerning the Processing of Rabbits for Consumption***

As a CT voter and someone who cares for animals, people and the environment, I am opposed to HB 5263, An Act Concerning the Processing of Rabbits for Consumption. I do not want my tax dollars used to promote or oversee the killing of rabbits; they are smart and sociable and have unique personalities. Rabbits are wonderful pets, I've enjoyed spending time with and caring for the rabbit pets of family and friends.

Public demand has prompted many cosmetic companies to stop testing on rabbits, many furriers no longer produce coats made from the pelts of rabbits, and laws have been passed that disallow sale of commercially bred rabbits in pet stores. PetSmart and Petco no longer sell rabbits, and when Whole Foods piloted selling rabbit meat, vigorous public outcry resulted in discontinuing sales.

If we can learn lessons from the pandemic, one might be that we should work together to find non-animal options to fulfill consumer demand for products of all kinds, and aid the transition of people relying on animal agriculture for their living to opportunities in more sustainable commercial endeavors. Since we now understand how dangerous viruses jump from animals to humans, it would follow that Connecticut's Department of Agriculture might better focus their resources on promoting plant-based products, including expansion and innovation of plant-based proteins, to ensure a greater availability of more diverse, safe, and dependable protein sources.

I ask that you please stand with me in opposing HB 5263.

Thank you.

Doreen Fleming

Monroe CT